

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A traffic congestion control apparatus for use in a network having a plurality of types of data traffic, the data traffic comprising high priority traffic and low priority traffic, the network having a plurality of links through which the data traffic flows, each of the links being susceptible to data traffic congestion, the apparatus comprising:

a filter that filters the data traffic;

a sampler that samples a characteristic of the data traffic filtered by the filter, the characteristic of the data traffic indicating a present link capacity requirement of the filtered traffic; and

a flow control system that adjusts the transmission rate of the low priority traffic in response to the sampled characteristic.

2. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the sampled characteristic is a low frequency bandwidth.

3. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 2, wherein the network is an asynchronous transfer method (ATM) network.

4. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 3, wherein the high priority data traffic comprises constant bit rate (CBR) traffic and variable bit rate (VBR) traffic, and the low priority traffic comprises available bit rate (ABR) traffic.

5. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 1, further comprising a queue buffer which temporarily stores the data traffic before the data traffic flows through each of the links.

6. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 5, wherein the queue buffer is a SRAM.

7. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 1, in which the filter further comprises a low pass filter.

8. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 1, in which the filter further comprises a digital signal processor.

5 9. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 8, wherein the filtering operation comprises a multiple step moving average operation having a predetermined time step unit.

10. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the filter filters only the high priority traffic.

10 11. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 2, further comprising a controller that calculates an optimal low priority traffic flow rate based on the measured low frequency bandwidth of the filtered data traffic and a total link capacity, the controller indicating to the flow control system an amount to adjust the low priority data traffic flow based on the calculated optimal low priority traffic flow rate.

15 12. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 11, wherein the controller further determines a round trip delay and accounts for the round trip delay in the calculation of the optimal low priority traffic flow rate.

20 13. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 12, further comprising a plurality of flow control systems, each of the flow control systems being associated with each link, the controller indicating the optimal flow rate to each of the plurality of flow control systems.

25 14. The traffic congestion control apparatus in accordance with claim 13, wherein each of the flow control systems controls a flow of a plurality of low priority inputs and the controller accounts for the number of inputs to each flow control system to determine the optimal flow rate for each flow control system.

16. A method for controlling congestion in a network having data traffic comprising high priority traffic and low priority traffic, the low priority traffic being transmitted by a plurality of data inputs, the network comprising a plurality of links through which the data traffic flows, the method comprising:

periodically sampling the filtered traffic to estimate a present link capacity
10 required by the high priority traffic; and

17. The method for controlling congestion in a network of claim 16, wherein the filtering comprises passing the data traffic through a low pass filter.

19. The method for controlling congestion in a network of claim 16, wherein the filtered data traffic includes the high priority traffic.

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